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ABSTRACT

This issue of "Focus" includes seven essays addressing various concerns related to community college curriculum, instruction, and instructors. "Money, and the Good of Humanities," by Dr. Demont H. Howell, explores the utility of humanities education in preparing students for coping with the present and the future. "Teaching High Level Thinking in Lower Division Humanities Classes," by Ace G. Pilkington, outlines a series of instructional techniques that challenge students to think logically and creatively. "Generalize That Vocation," by Elaine Englehardt, underscores the importance of both a general education and a specialized vocation, exploring the potential for closer links between the two. "Another View of Western Civilization: Rethinking Values from an American Perspective," by Dr. Michael Petersen, challenges the "traditional perspective" on western history through American values, proposing that Western Civilization be viewed as an interaction of different cultures. "Computer-Assisted Writing: Do the Pros Outweigh the Cons?" by Deanne W. Thomas, provides a personal analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of using computers for writing instruction. "Stress and Burnout: Coping Skills for the College Professor," by Larry R. Christensen, discusses various types of stress and methods for dealing with them. Finally, "Enhancing Learning by Promoting Self-Esteem and Self-Acceptance," by Dr. Sharon Staples, examines the role of the educator in building a student's self-esteem and the role of self-esteem and self-acceptance in the educational process. (EJV)

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MONEY, AND THE "GOOD" OF HUMANITIES

Dr. Demont H. Howell

Utility? Humanities! Sacrilege. Nonsense, say most of my colleagues. That, they say, is what makes the humanities humanities. Humanities are not utilitarian. They don't *have* to do anyone any good. They don't have to help us cope with the present, or provide for a future. The humanities deal with art, creativity, with things spiritual, with higher truths. They deal with culture, with classics, with artists, and philosophies. They deal with the past. Utility? Good? Only a prosaic pragmatist or an apostate humanist would talk so crazy. To which I respectfully answer "*B*ird *S*eed!"

It may have been Moses or some other poet of equal lyrical genius who said that if one is out of step with his companions, he is almost sure to be stomped. Still, at the risk of convicting myself of being a pragmatist and a "humanist-gone astray," I would like to suggest that humanities can — nay must — have utility if the public is to commit resources to teaching them. I suggest further that it may be those who insist that humanities are their own ends and that the public has an obligation to support them even without a reasoned answer to the question "Why?" who are the anachronisms, the Miniver Cheevys who are so obsessed with the past that they can see no reason to relate it functionally to the present. And (more prosaically still) it may be that these same purists are contributing to the increasing reluctance of the public to fund the humanities, with their vaguely stated objectives, on a par with instruction that promises an immediate dollar return.

Definition

Part of the apparent lack of agreement about the degree to which humanities should be useful is simply one of communications — more precisely, definition. As Plato and hundreds since have observed, if we are to communicate with each other we need to mean the same thing when we use words. With both the term *humanities* and good (or *utility*) we sometimes try to communicate without coming close to understanding what each other means. When some (perhaps most) speak of humanities, they mean only that broadest of all definitions, i.e., the branches of learning which are culturally related. Such a definition includes the arts as a substantial, if not central, part of the humanities.

Some think of humanities as being an alternative for (indeed an opposite of) the sciences. Still others define humanities as being different from the arts, but including the philosophic and theoretic facets of science. It is significant that the Congress of the United States created an endowment for the humanities *and* a separate endowment for the arts; likewise many schools (like Snow College), which combine arts and humanities into the same administrative unit, name the division a division of (the) arts and (the) humanities.

DEMONT H. HOWELL has earned degrees from all three Utah universities (B.S., English, Utah State; M.A., Education Administration, B.Y.U.; and Ph.D., English, U. of U.). He is currently professor of English and philosophy at Snow College, where for the past nine years he has been chairman of the Division of Humanities and Arts.

I have long since recognized the impossibility of writing a clean, universally acceptable definition for humanities. The fact is that since usage makes the definition (not the opposite) so long as people use the term in different ways, it will *ipso facto* have diiferent meanings.

For my part, however, I lean more towards Prometheus, the champion of mankind, as the archetype for humanities than toward Hephaestus, the artist and artisan. Science, which is Latin for "knowledge" is akin to the humanities as are *history*, a Greek word meaning "search," and *philosophy* meaning "love of wisdom." I see humanities as having more to do with the thoughts, values, and judgments of humans than with their artifacts. From such a point of view the works of man became humanities only to the extent they help others to understand man and his relationship to the world in which he lives — past, present, and future.

However, even if the arts are admitted as central to humanities, I think I would still argue that teachers should be prepared to answer the questions "Why should we teach such courses?" "Why should students take them?" "Why should the public fund them?" in terms of how students' lives will be better as a result of that study. If teachers cannot, or if they have never even considered the questions, public reluctance to fund the humanities is likely to increase.

May I state unequivocally that I an *not* suggesting that the worth of humanities be measured in dollar value. However, the study of humanities does cost money, and the public deserves to know *what* of value they are getting for their money. It is not enough to argue that the humanities are good. We must persuade a skeptical public what they are good for. And these values (while not measured in dollars) must be more specific than high sounding but empty platitudes. For example, if you had $5,000 and only $5,000 to spend on your child's education, you too might be more inclined to spend your money on studies that promise a job than on studies that promise to "go beyond superficial and objective reality or reasoning to reveal deeper truths."

Value of Humanities

This whole question of the value of humanities leads to the second concept in which lack of definition stands in the way of clear communication. What do I mean when I say that the humanities or arts (or any other subject) should *do* some good — should have a value that can be articulated and communicated? What do I mean when I say that if a person is no better (or better off) for having an instructional experience, the instruction should be modified or deleted?

Partially I mean that the student has a right to ask, "How will I be better (or better off) if I read 'Beowolf,' or 'The Fairie Queene,' or 'Paradise Lost,' or 'the Canterbury Tales' than if I don't?"

Partially I mean that our responses must be honest, and that if we ourselves see little of worth, we should be forthright enough to say so, and modify the course accordingly. But what do we mean by "of worth?"

When I say the humanities can make people better (can do them good) I do not mean that we make them "gooder." I do not mean people will necessarily be more chaste, benevolent, kind, generous, or honest — though a well-conceived humanities experience may well contribute to these objectives.

I think of *better* in the sense that Aristotle used the word *virtue*. He did not mean *virtuous* as we now use that word to refer to social (often religious) precepts. He meant something more like quality or value — to be of worth.

Virtues Described

May Aristotle forgive me for the comparison, but it's a little like an automobile. A car that is tight and warm is a better automobile than one that is noisy and drafty. If it has power to go up hills at the speed we desire, it is better than if it does not. If it gives us 30

miles per gallon of fuel, it is better than if it gives us 10.

Likewise, a person who recognizes fallacies in reasoning is better than one who does not. A person who understands and recognizes the universal drives and needs of mankind is better than one who does not. A person who finds pleasure in words, paintings, or music — or who enjoys nature more fully because literature and art have heightened his sensitivity — has a "virtue" that others do not have. A person who can communicate with force and clarity is better than one who cannot. And people who make policy decisions based upon reason and evidence are more likely to contribute to a better quality of life for themselves and those who follow them than are people who make decisions based upon emotion, prejudice, or personal interest. Those who, like Sir Francis Bacon, are committed to "weigh and consider" are more to be trusted than those who like MacBeth make the ". . . firstlings of my heart . . . the firstlings of my hand." And yes, those who have respect for honesty, fair play, and consideration for others are (all other things being equal) better than those who do not.

Can the humanities help to mold such people? Of course they can — sometimes by accident, but even more if teachers clearly conceive their objectives and teach their classes accordingly.

If students are helped to see in "Young Goodman Brown" the mix of admirable and despicable that co-exist in unequal parts in all of us, they are less likely to hate, or become cynical, or lose total respect for those they find to fall short of the ideal.
They are more likely to understand the implications of the folk rhyme . . .

> If *white* is *good*
> And *black* is *bad*,
> Then all I know
> Are grey or plaid.

And with this increased understanding they move a step closer to maturity.

Material Rewards vs. Promises

If the public has shut its purse to the humanities, it is in part because immediate objectives and material rewards have always motivated more quickly than have the promises that one might become a better (by whatever definition) person. In part, however, the public simply wants to know what it is getting for its money, and pretending to be above such low, pragmatic questions as a means to avoid dealing with them head on is hurting our cause. At least since Horace's *Art of Poetry*, literature (which unifies art, history, philosophy, science, sociology and fantasy in liberal proportions) has had an acknowledged responsibility both to please and to instruct.

The humanities are not just about art. They are not ends unto themselves. They can, do, and must contribute something of value to those who study them — both to the students personally and, less directly, to society at large.

To the extent that we refuse to "dirty" our minds with the utility of the humanities, the public will increasingly spend its money elsewhere in the vain hope of finding in the magic of technology or the innovations of the show-and-tellers the means to solve problems that can only be solved by enlightened humans.

Our Own Offensive

We need not only a clear, down-to-earth perspective of what we are trying to accomplish, but we need an offensive of our own. We need to point out that study after study has confirmed that the qualities employers most desire in employees include communication skills, social skills, and discipline. We need to point out that demands for technological skills change rapidly, that jobs come and go, that beyond entry-level skills other qualities than technical competence determine not only one's employability but the levels to which he will rise. It might be significant that the chairman of the vocational division and vocational director at

Snow College has as his formal education a master's in English — and this in spite of the fact that Snow has numerous technical instructors who are technically highly qualified and who are competent instructors.

We need to be willing to consider to what extent the lessons we teach contribute to vocational support as well as to the virtue (quality) of the individual. In short, we need to know what our classes are good for.

For those who react negatively to the suggestion that humanistic studies thoughtfully taught do result in desirable change (that is, they do do good) I would pose a question. If as a result of studying our classes students are neither happier, wiser, nor more effective in society — if life is no better, if they contribute no more to coping with the present or providing a meaningful future — why, then WHY, *should* the public commit any substantial portion of its resources to the humanities and those who teach them?

TEACHING HIGH-LEVEL THINKING IN LOWER DIVISION HUMANITIES CLASSES

Ace G. Pilkington

"Education is that which remains after we have forgotten everything we learned in college."
– Albert Einstein

Einstein's comment is both sardonic and pessimistic if we take it to mean that all the things we learn in college hinder our education, and only after this immense mass of useless material has been dissipated by the beneficial process of forgetfulness can we get on with what life and learning are about. It is illuminating and optimistic, however, if we take it to mean that after the mass of facts which we accumulated in college has silently (and almost unnoticed) slipped away, we still have what we went to college for in the first place — an understanding of the means of learning — an ability to think logically and even creatively — in short, an education.

Teaching Techniques

If we are teaching our students to think, we are justified — if not perhaps in attributing optimism to Einstein — at least in being optimists ourselves. But how does an actual teacher (not the always-successful abstraction who moves easily through the pages of educational theorists) go into a real classroom and teach a student how to think? Here are some techniques that seem to work for me — together with their disadvantages and dangers.

Discussion

1. "There's nothing either right or wrong but talking makes it so."

There is, of course, no new and magic method of generating thought in the mind of a student, and the oldest method of all — though it is still sometimes the most keenly resisted — is discussion. If students are to learn to think, they must practice the process; they must come up with their own ideas, and then they must have a chance to test those ideas, to see them subjected to the criticisms of their peers and their instructors. Classroom discussions can accomplish all of these goals beautifully.

Unfortunately, they can also accomplish a number of less desirable things. Free (or even semi-free) discussions — and students aren't likely to learn much if they're caught in a web of restrictions that won't let them move — are subversive of authority both inside and outside the classroom. A lecture is, by contrast, a carefully controlled environment: the teacher speaks, the students listen (or are at least quietly inattentive), a few questions are asked, and a great many notes are scribbled. No one is challenged; no one is threatened.

A discussion is another matter. It can (and sometimes should) move anywhere. Talking about Shakespeare's court fools may lead a student to observe (as one of mine did) that

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Murdoch in *The A Team* performs much the same function. Asking for an evaluation of Shylock may result in a student emphatically and admiringly endorsing everything Shylock does as good business practice. At which point another student will (inevitably, in my experience) just as emphatically condemn Shylock and what often passes for good business. Class time and class control are now split between the teacher and the students; discussion can easily become digression, and getting back to the subject and covering the material can be considerably more difficult than in the kind of class where the lecture topic can be scheduled five weeks in advance.

Also, in the natural course of events, discussion (and thinking) leads to real questions, not the simple clarifications of detail that are often fitted in during pauses in a formal lecture. The teacher may find himself defending his basic assumptions and failing to convince a particularly skeptical (or argumentative) group that he knows what he's talking about. This is a healthy experience for everyone involved, but it's sometimes hard to remember that while it's actually taking place. And there is the additional danger that students will take their newfound skepticism and skills outside the classroom and annoy friends, administrators, parents, or the community at large. From Socrates on, teachers who have encouraged such nuisances have had problems.

The Right Answer

II. "Right you are"

One tremendous advantage of the technique of discussion is that it makes it easier to get away from the tyranny of the right answer. Too many of our students are conditioned to expect simple questions, simpler answers, and to see them as a means, not to an education, but to a series of grades that result in a marketable degree. The scholarly method of careful analysis and the essentially complex nature of the real world both contradict this all-too-comfortable conditioning, but it is sometimes hard to make that contradiction clear to a student who has spent most of his educational life putting the right answer in the right place.

Shylock, for instance, is right to resent the prejudice that shuts him out because he is a Jew; he is wrong to hate Antonio because Antonio is a Christian. Shylock is right to demand justice but wrong to ignore mercy. He is at one and the same time a pathetic figure who deserves our sympathy and compassion and a villainous character who merits our laughter and condemnation. But simply to say these things to a class will not convince them, will not demonstrate for them the terrible complexity of human beings and human issues; a discussion, and argument, with various voices defending Shylock's virtues and attacking his vices will make the point as clearly as it can be made.

Class Discussion Tests

III. "Others abide our question"

One of the reasons facts are easier to teach than thoughts is that facts are easier to test for. But there are a couple of testing techniques that can be used to teach thinking and, incidentally, to give direction to discussions. One such method is to construct multiple choice questions that come directly from the class discussions. This accomplishes several things: it rewards those students who pay attention (and who come to class) without resorting to giving points for participation, it clearly demonstrates that the discussions are part of the learning process since the test is (at least in the eyes of most students) the ultimate standard of legitimacy, and it can provide a means for emphasizing that even on a test, an answer may be tentative and temporary. (One of my multiple choice questions began, "Our final answer — at least for this week . . .") It also gives the students a sense of having found the answers — or at least the means to the answers — for themselves.

Another method which I have found extremely useful is the essay test, but an essay

test with a difference. On test day I usually provide my students with several essay questions from which they are to select the one they like most or hate least and produce a well thought-out piece of writing. This works, and despite the extra time that essays require from the teacher, there is really no way around them. If writing is crystallized thought, and thought is what we want to teach, somewhere along the line we must create the saturated solution from which those crystals precipitate.

Test Variations

My slight variation on this old technique is to hand out in advance of the test (and use as a means of directing the discussions) from six to ten "possible" essay questions. The students know that approximately half of those possibilities will appear on the test, and that they will be required to write about one of them. This makes a direct connection between thinking, talking, and writing. It also makes it possible for me to point out that there are a number of different ways to answer any question and also to emphasize that I am more interested in the quality of the thought and the thoroughness of the support than in whether or not the student is agreeing with what he thinks I think on the subject.

It's Not Easy

Teaching thinking (like thinking itself) is not easy. It is exhausting and exhilarating, frustrating and fascinating, dangerous and delightful, but it is not easy. Facts are safer both to hold onto and to teach, though fortunately or unfortunately, in this confused time and place where we find ourselves, facts are neither as useful nor as permanent as that process by which we weigh both them and ourselves. If we are to be optimists, if our colleges are to have meaning in our lives after we have forgotten most of the small things they taught us, then the single large thing which our colleges must teach us — which we must teach our students — is how to think.

GENERALIZE THAT VOCATION

Elaine Englehardt

In this age of specialization, particularly in our undergraduate schools, educators and legislators are debating the value of a general education versus a specialized vocation. Actually, the two should not be mutually exclusive. Each enriches the other and the entire educational system would be the poorer for the diminution of either part. Liberal studies and specialized education are complimentary in the analogical sense that the opposite of depth is not breadth, but shallowness and the opposite of breadth is not depth but narrowness. In plain language, a college student will gain more out of life if he or she will not only specialize in a particular area, but with added general education will also understand his own field in the context of the whole of human knowledge. Students need to understand the practice and theory of their own work, but they should also be aware of the foundations of culture and the principles of social living. They must know more than how to do something; they must know how to be someone. Both areas of education are necessary in today's society.

Reasons for Specialization

Many persons who are drifting away from the general education program feel vocational and specialized education bring the answers to their goals for many reasons. One reason centers around students and parents who have a limited amount of money and cannot afford the high costs of a liberal education. They are aware they must have an education to obtain a job, and so often with specialized course offerings and designated company training programs, students can obtain a technical education without putting a hardship on the family. Statistics show that employers are looking for graduates who have a working knowledge. They want someone who has taken courses and perhaps done work that directly relates to the format of the company. Many students who have only taken general education programs, often find themselves working in a position beneath their education. In this position they often receive specialized training so they can function in the world of work. A reason for a vocational education is that businesses often stress that the local colleges must work with them hand in hand to offer courses that would give them the types of graduates they could immediately use. This saves them from training someone extensively and also helps the members of the community follow vocational courses where they know employment exists.

In these times of high unemployment — the highest level in 42 years — even educated and skilled persons find themselves in a situation of retraining. This is often a time when people are not concerned about self-esteem or self-actualization, but are only looking for

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satisfaction of physical needs. They want specialized training to enable them to once again provide for their family. Harold W. McGraw Jr., Chairman of McGraw-Hill Inc., agrees with this, and in a speech before the Business Education Division of the 1982 American Vocational Association Convention, said:

> But even the skilled face the problem of the rapid and continual change in the pattern of skills needed in our society. Aviation, television and the computer industry as three examples have created millions of jobs requiring kinds of skills that simply did not exist before. With the more and more rapid transformation of our society by technology, this situation is constantly repeated. And as technology creates these new jobs, it makes others obsolete. We have the enormous challenge of retraining our work force as we re-equip our industries. And we have what may be an even greater challenge in seeing that young people do not leave school lacking skills that will enable them to play a productive role in this increasingly technological economy.[1]

Persons in favor of a liberal education program stress that through this complete type of education, we learn how to be someone not just do something. McGraw differs with this. He feels the strength of this nation depends upon keeping the nation skilled and productive.

> Developing a skilled, fully employable, productive labor force is central to the solution of most of our major problems. The war against unemployment and poverty depends upon it. Restoring national growth depends on it. Enabling more individuals to have a dignified independent role in society depends on it, and in turn, vocational education — a really adequate and comprehensive program of vocational education — is vital if we are to have that kind of labor force.[2]

The U. S. Congress, in looking at reauthorization of the Vocational Education Act, hoped to find ways to get Americans back in the work force — a task that used to be an objective for universities. The Act outlines the following points:

1. How can vocational education programs be kept current with the workplace and what can federal legislation do to affect the process?
2. What can be done to link the private sector employer more closely with local vocational education programs?
3. What new provisions will be needed in federal legislation to assist states with upgrading the quality of programs related to math, science and computer technology?
4. What new initiatives will be needed to assist vocational education programs to serve dislocated, unemployed youth and adults?[3]

Vocational education is setting the pace for much of America's work force. Maslow's hierarchy of needs stresses that a person cannot be concerned about enrichment until his physical needs are satisfied. Once these needs are satisfied, hopefully the individual will feel the need to learn of the masters in the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences. The vocational, technical, or specialized education is the answer to many of the nation's ills, but it is not the only answer.

The federal government, on the other hand, is trying to enrich vocational education with a strong smattering of general education courses. Currently, there is a bill before Congress that would give vocational institutions financial assistance to strengthen instruction in mathematics, science, computer education and foreign languages. The government is leaving the message that these programs, which have generally been thought of as general education, serve strong vocational needs of the society.

Liberal Education Values

General and liberal education is best described as that education which liberates a person to be truly human. The courses in a general education program fall in the categories of humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. In a more broad sense, general education has a generous dosage of philosophy, literature, music, English, classical education, some science, and some math courses. These courses are generally centered around the theme, "What is true education and what does it mean to be more human?" This question was recently answered in the Commission of Humanities Report entitled, "The Humanities in American Life." The report states:

> Through the Humanities, we reflect on the fundamental question: what does it mean to be human? The humanities offer clues but never a complete answer. They reveal how people have tried to make moral, spiritual and intellectual sense of a world in which irrationality, despair, loneliness and death are as conspicuous as birth, friendship, hope, and reason. We learn how individuals and societies define the moral life and try to attain it, attempt to reconcile freedom and the responsibilities of citizenship and express themselves artistically as well. The humanities do not necessarily mean humaneness, nor do they always inspire the individual with what Cicero called "incentives to noble action" but by an wakening sense of what it might be like to be someone else, to live in another time or another culture; they tell us about ourselves. They stretch our imagination and they enrich our experience. They increase our distinctively human potential.[4]

Educators in the nation's 3,000 colleges and universities are alarmed at the shrinking liberal arts programs and plan to recapture the students and the job market. The Association of American Colleges, which promotes liberal arts education, recently launched a $100,000 year-long public information campaign called, "Get a liberal education . . . it's the course of life." Many educators agree with Dr. Max Boyer from Bradford College who states:

> Campuses tend to return to basic values when there is a sense of anxiousness about the disintegration of a sense of community and purpose on a larger social scale. We as a nation went through similar periods following World Wars I and II. There is a feeling that universities must claim a larger purpose and contribute to values that seem threatened.[5]

Scholars and administrators are rebelling against the need to add courses to the curriculum such as automotive technology, construction education, and mortuary science. Instead, many of the colleges that are members of the Association of American Colleges have risen to the occasion with vigorous debates on the purpose of education with a renewed committment to the liberal arts. A spokesman for the group, Dr. Arthur Levine, stated, "There's a backlash among educators who are asking, 'Is this all we are, simply an extension of the marketplace?' A college education is supposed to help bring meaning to students' lives."[6]

Dr. Levine, who made his statement in an essay published last year on general education for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, also stated that new general education programs as well as additional requirements in liberal arts for students ". . . are springing up like topsy."

Locking Arms

Vocational education and general education must lock arms and weather the harsh economic and budgetary times. Perhaps we should remember that whenever a person learns something new, whether it be a skill or a poem, they have been educated.

Many students who cannot attend a university, because of economic conditions, time limits, or numerous other variables, are able to gain full enrichment at community colleges. At the community college, the student can obtain a vocation or specialization and also have the opportunity to take a variety of general education courses. General studies

and technical studies can enrich each other. They are complementary in the sense that the opposite of depth is not breadth, but shallowness. Let's make sure we give our students more than training; let's give them an education.

Notes

[1] Harold W. McGraw, Jr., "A Business and Education Partnership In Putting Americ a Back to Work," *Voc. Ed.* April, 1983, p. 53.

[2] McGraw, p. 54.

[3] *Reauthorization of the Vocational Education Act*, (Washington D. C.: GPO), Spring, 1983.

[4] Richard Lyman, *The Humanities in American Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1978.

[5] Arthur Levine, "General Education," an Essay published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1982.

[6] Ibid.

ANOTHER VIEW OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION: RETHINKING VALUES FROM AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Michael Petersen

There are significant assumptions and values which underly the traditional lower-division history courses, and it is appropriate to make those values explicit, and to rethink them.

When we talk about history at the two-year college, we generally mean American History and Western Civilization. Although there may be other history courses in our catalogs, nearly all the students who enroll in history at a community college will limit their selection to one or the other of these basic survey courses.

An Alternate Approach

There is an alternate approach to teaching the initial course in Western Civilization. Its primary objective is to introduce students to the conditions which produced civilizations, in both the Old World and the New World, and to describe and compare the key features of early civilizations of the Near East, the Americas, and Europe. It prepares the student to understand the character of civilization by discussing in greater detail than is generally the case the evolution of humans, their migration to diverse areas of the world, and the changes which occurred in human societies with the advent of agriculture. The early civilizations of the Americas — Olmec, Teotihuacan, Maya, Aztec, and societies of the American southwest — receive attention equal to the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. The peoples of the Americas are not treated as an afterthought, but receive parallel, thorough, and comparative coverage throughout.

There is a central, underlying message to this approach. Humanity, as a whole, has a past that is richer and more productive of insight than do any of the separate groups which make up the species. To treat the native cultures of the Americas as people without history is to lessen the meaning of our total experience as human beings, just as much as ignoring the contribution of cultures of the Near East and Europe would be. To include their story as part of the examination of the development of civilization and its changing character is to immeasurably enrich the history of all humanity.

During the past three years, we have replaced the traditional content in our initial Western Civilization course at the College of Eastern Utah with content which utilizes comparative Old World and New World material. This revision is the result of a three-year project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. We started with the belief that this approach would be more beneficial to the native students who were enrolled in history courses at the CEU San Juan Center at Blanding or on the Navajo

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reservation nearby. The course content that is reflected in this manual has been taught several times at the CEU San Juan Center during the past three years. We have concluded that native students are more interested in a course which includes the history of their own culture, and which respects native traditions. We are also convinced that non-native students gain more from a course taught from this perspective.

The Traditional Perspective

The content of most basic history courses in community colleges reflects the European origins of those of us who teach and write history. Consequently, history courses are usually recounted from a European perspective.

The result of this European bias in the teaching of Western Civilization and American History is to seriously mislead our students concerning the development of non-Western cultures and civilizations. For example, after taking the typical lower division course, our students would be totally unaware that humanity in the Americas had developed cultures with rich traditions and values, and had made significant scientific and technological progress long before the discovery of the continents by Europeans.

The content of Western Civilization courses includes a description of the emergence of civilizations in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the development of western traditions in Greece and Rome, key features of Medieval and Renaissance Europe, and the development of modern political and economic institutions in Europe and their spread throughout the world as a result of European colonization and imperialism. The American college student would have to assume from such a course that as agriculture, urbanization, and civilization were developing in the Old World the Americas were empty continents, for there is silence regarding the New World until it is discovered by Europeans in the late 15th Century.

American History courses do occasionally have brief sections which recognize the presence of native societies prior to the arrival of Europeans. However, the focus of these courses is the continuity of western traditions in America and the history of Europeans or their descendents as they built political, economic, and social institutions patterned after Western examples on this continent.

The disregard that we historians show for the precolumbian history of the Americas is only one of countless illustrations of the misunderstanding and lack of respect which underscored the European attitude toward Native Americans from 1492 until the present time.

This misunderstanding was demonstrated from the very beginning of the European/Native relationship, when Columbus claimed Watling Island in 1492. A native American writing several centuries later would comment that this action was comparable to a native American visiting Italy and declaring it to be the property of his tribe, for it was obvious that people already occupied the land. Recent estimates of the population of the Americas prior to the beginning of European colonization indicate that as many as 90 to 110 million inhabitants lived on the two continents; a number very close to the population of Europe at the same time. But prior occupation meant nothing to the Spanish, or to Europeans from other countries who would soon follow. For them, the land was not

being stolen from others who were there first. The natives simply had no rights to property which Europeans could not easily ignore, circumvent, or negate through force of arms.

The reaction of the island inhabitants also revealed how unprepared they were to fully understand and deal with the people who suddenly appeared on their beach. One of them incautiously touched a sword carried by one of the sailors and cut his finger. The natives were unprepared to challenge the newcomers militarily, for the metal swords and cannons of the Spanish were technologically so superior to the obsidian spears and bows and arrows they possessed. Far more threatening than the weapons, however, were the microscopic bacteria and viruses which these foreigners brought ashore. The thousands of years of separation in the Americas has prevented the natives from developing immunity to diseases produced by the microbes, which were common in Europe. In the following decades, far more natives would die from these new diseases than from the weapons.

Underlying this momentous occasion on the beach at Watling Island was the tragedy of misunderstanding. The natives failed to realize how vulnerable they were to a wide range of abuses (military, economic, physical, and psychological) which the newcomers were capable of inflicting upon them. And the Europeans were unprepared to develop a mutually-enriching relationship with the natives. Most importantly, they lacked attitudes which would cause them to soften the impact of the actions which they would direct at the natives. Conquest and domination appeared to them to be the only ways to deal with these newly discovered peoples.

For almost five centuries since that reunion on the beach, the attitudes of Europeans who migrated to the Americas have been similar to those of the first arrivals in 1492. First, we treated the Americas as empty continents which we could claim and exploit, just as oblivious to the fact that the land was already occupied as were Columbus and his sailors. Second, Europeans regarded themselves as civilized peoples bringing progress to barbaric savages. The possibility that native societies possessed knowledge which was worth learning was not seriously entertained by European migrants. Consequently, with only minor exceptions, the history of the Americas is the history of transplanted Europeans who brought Western civilization from the Old World with them and adapted it to conditions they found in the Americas. Third, Europeans have based their relationships with native societies on the assumption that conquest and domination were necessary. Policies of mutual respect and cooperation have existed only briefly, and then only when Europeans enjoyed positions of power that placed them at an overwhelming advantage over the natives.

As historians, when we ignore the history of native societies in the Americas, we perpetuate the myths, the misunderstandings, the tragedy which have underlaid European/Native relationships for nearly 500 years.

CEU Instructor's Manual

Because our approach represented a significant departure from traditional Western Civilization courses, we found that it was necessary to supplement standard texts with articles and other materials from a variety of sources. To provide cohesion for the course, a detailed instructor's manual has been written. It outlines the material to be presented in lectures, identifies readings to be used in each unit of the course, and provides instructional objectives and other learning aids to help students master the information. Copies of the instructor's manual are available from the CEU history department for anyone who may be interested.

Kay Shumway, Director of Instruction at the CEU San Juan Center was primarily responsible for preparing the grant request which the National Endowment for the Humanities funded. He has administered the

project and maintained enthusiasm for it throughout. Two adjunct instructors at the CEU San Juan Center, Lee Reynolds and Ches Godfredson, participated in teaching the classes and in developing the information that has been incorporated into the instructor's manual.

We now realize that after three years, we have barely begun to make the adjustments in our history curriculum that are necessary. The second and third classes in our Western Civilization sequence must now be revised, and American History also requires major alterations in content. However, it is imperative that these changes be made, for until they are we will continue to provide our students with a limited, biased view of history.

COMPUTER-ASSISTED WRITING: DO THE PROS OUTWEIGH THE CONS?

Deanne W. Thomas

Three years ago, I thought the term "software" referred to a type of flannel bathrobe. And in my ignorance, the computer's image loomed over me in mythical proportions like a mechanical genie who could be handled by only the most sophisticated computer scientists, mathematicians and systems analysts. Certainly a mere English instructor like me couldn't understand the mystifying machines, let alone apply them to anything English-related. Being exposed to the idea of computer-assisted writing, therefore, was intriguing yet intimidating.

Computer and Composition

In the winter of 1982, Judy Lunt, a fellow Utah Technical College English instructor, was the first to stir my interest with the possibility of combining computer and composition. Later that year I attended the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) convention in Washington where I found that the unlikely combination was not only a possibility but a maturing reality, one that many universities and colleges, including two in Utah (Utah State and Weber State), were successfully developing.

According to the claims made at the convention and in subsequent readings, computer-assisted writing (CAW) could improve not only students' writing but also their typing, creativity, self-esteem and confidence in writing. Full of curiosity and hope, our English faculty drove to Weber State to validate those claims. There we found a CAW laboratory full of contented students busily composing their papers on word processors and running them through a program which checked for spelling, grammar and some aspects of style. After witnessing the students' enthusiasm and hearing their glowing testimonies, we were sold. By September 1984, through the combined efforts of our administration and English faculty, we purchased 22 Dec Rainbow 100 computers with 22 LA50 printers and began grappling with the genie.

After only seven months of grappling, I am admittedly still a novice when it comes to computers. However, Judy Lunt and I have piloted eight sections of computer-assisted English 100 and 101 courses, not including this quarter (Spring, 1985). Although we are not experts on the subject, we have had enough experience to be aware of both the pros and cons of CAW. First, the pros:

The Pros

As anyone who has experienced word processing knows, composing on a word processor is easier and, therefore, more fun than composing by hand or typewriter. Our department chose the "EasyWriter" word processing program. It is not as sophisticated as others, but, as the name implies, it is easy to apply, and what capabilities it does offer are ample for our needs. In general, however, all

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word processors free students to experiment, modify and create without having to face the task of re-typing or re-writing their papers over and over again. Being liberated from the actual physical demands of writing, students naturally write more, and because they write more, they become better writers. Comments such as "It was easier to correct and improvise. . . . Therefore, I feel that my writing skills were improved," and "The computer allowed me to do 10 times the writing I would have done without it," typify the attitude expressed on the majority of last quarter's English Computer Lab evaluation forms.

Papers Look Good

Students also find typing on a word processor more gratifying because they can easily make their papers look good. "Sometimes I can't read my own handwriting, and THAT gets embarrassing," one student wrote on his evaluation. Another commented, "I have terrible handwriting but was proud for once to hand in my assignments since they were written on the computer." Another student lamented about a hidden benefit: "The bad thing is that my punctuation errors stood out more boldly!"

Other Capabilities

Besides providing word processing capabilities, our lab also provides a "dictionary," the Random House Proofreader, which checks papers for possible misspellings and "typos." Our computerized dictionary, or "speller," does not correct students' spelling; instead, it points out words that do not match its own list of words. The major advantage of the speller is that it makes it hard for students to overlook or ignore questionable words and forces them to look them up in a regular dictionary. I now see our English students paying more attention to their spelling and honing up their dictionary skills than ever before.

Two other programs we offer are "Grammatik" and "Comment" which work in conjunction to analyze and comment on the grammatical and stylistic make-up of students' writing. The programs are limited; however, the feedback they do give is immediate and objective. Students like that. They tend to give more credence to the computer's advice than they do the instructor's advice, usually passed back several days after submission in the form of red circles and scratches.

Content vs. Mechanics

CAW is also a blessing for instructors. It frees them up to spend less time on the mechanical aspects of writing and more time on the "higher" principles of writing such as development of ideas, organization and logic. Since all assignments, even in-class writing assignments, are typed, instructors can spend their time — and base their criticism — more on the content of the writing than the appearance of the handwriting.

By no means, however, does CAW do all the work for either instructor or student. Merle Marsh, author of "Universal Truths" [about education and computers], states sarcastically, "Teachers who do not want to use word processing in their English classes think word processors will write compositions for students." Many instructors do attribute, as I did, far too many capabilities to computers in general and word processors in specific. Although computer-assisted writing does offer

advantages that I and 93% of last quarter's responding CAW students will never again want to do without, it does have its limits and problems that generally aren't as well publicized as its benefits. Which brings me to the cons:

The Cons

First of all, setting up an English computer lab is no easy feat. It takes lots of money, lots of time and lots of expertise — all of which are usually in short supply. Although our department has had access to limited funds, a computer lab can swallow more money than can be expected. Paper, diskettes, read/write head cleaners, screen cleaners, tables and chairs are a few examples of the many hidden costs involved with a lab. The hidden costs alone drained our department's yearly budget in one quarter.

Time and Costs

The time we have spent on the lab has also far surpassed our expectations. Our naivete about computers has, of course, added to the required amount of time spent working on the lab, but even a "computer literate" would find it a full-time job to gather all the information and make all the decisions required for a smooth-running computer lab. It takes time to choose all the hardware and software. And it takes time to learn how to use them. It takes time to incorporate computers into the curriculum. And it takes time to schedule the use of the lab. It takes time to hire work study students to help with the lab. And it takes time to train them. It takes time to instruct students on how to use the computers. And it takes time to solve the many unexpected problems that arise frequently.

Technical Problems

The technical problems that do arise with computers are great sources of frustration for English instructors. Our school's own computer center maintains our computers and handles major problems (such as complete computer breakdowns), but many everyday problems occur which are too insignificant to warrant a call to computer maintenance yet are too perplexing for us to solve alone. For example, occasionally we find an error message flashing across a computer screen which we can't understand — nor can we understand the explanations when consulting the instruction manual. (Thank heaven for eager Data Processing students who have come to our aid time after time.)

Computers can also be vicious. They act up for no apparent reason. They eat diskettes. They refuse to load up programs. They go beserk with static electricity. Students often compound problems by mishandling diskettes, typing in the wrong commands, and shuffling their feet while they walk up to computers and unload static electricity all over the keyboards. They also forget to "save" their documents and therefore lose hours of irreplaceable work. For those students with poor or even non-existent typing skills, the computers add another dimension of frustration to writing.

Disappointing Software

Finally, there are companies developing some fairly sophisticated CAW software; however, much of what is on the market today is disappointing. Although we are impressed with the available word processing programs and spellers, we are not so taken with the majority of available "style checkers." They do certainly help, but the amount of writing problems with which they can help are definitely limited. For example, style checkers can not check for basic sentence structure problems like run-ons or fragments. Nor can they point out sentences written in the passive voice. Nor can they point out problems with parallel structure. And many times the problems they do point out are not applicable to a student's paper. "Grammatik," for example, points out "TH openers," openings students frequently use

to begin their sentences such as "These are . . ." or "This is . . ." It then goes on to explain that a good writer should indicate what the "The opener" is referring to; for example, "These flowers are. . ." or "This type of airplane is . . ." It's not long before students catch on to a simple concept like this, but there is no way that a computer can determine when she does. Long after students are making careful references when using "Th openers," the computer will continue to nag by redundantly offering the same suggestion.

Surprised and Encouraged

Despite the inherent problems associated with CAW, I have seen too many students, loathing English, drag into composition classes only to be pleasantly surprised and encouraged by the joy of composing on a computer. I have heard too many times, "I wouldn't have made it through English without the computers," to be too discouraged by the computer's limitations. And I have watched far too many inhibited, timid writers transform into strong, confident ones, to feel like the money, time and effort invested were in vain. Computers don't write compositions for students, nor, I hope, will they ever. They are, however, powerful writing tools, and as somebody somewhere once said, "Anything is possible with the right tool." As it turns out, I think the mechanical genie is, indeed, the right tool for compositions — as long as English instructors are willing to grapple with it.

STRESS AND BURNOUT: COPING SKILLS FOR THE COLLEGE PROFESSOR

Larry R. Christensen

In many colleges and universities, a significant number of professors suffer from high stress. Every occupation creates stress, but the challenges of college professors are unique. While some consider teaching a "helping" profession, it also brings isolation and loneliness not inherent in other careers. The teaching professional is locked into a teaching schedule which may not coincide with his colleagues, and professional support and interaction becomes minimal and/or superficial. The demand for excellence, the number of students with varying needs and expectations, coupled with self-induced perfectionism in the classroom, lay the foundation for what some have called the "big click." Add to this public attitudes toward education, studies advocating educational reform, lack of job mobility, and the high stress problem becomes even more evident.

Physician Hans Selye defines stress as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand made upon it." A certain amount of stress appears to be inevitable and worthwhile. A lifestyle without much stress will very likely be demeaning and lack real direction and purpose. Boredom and stagnation can be as detrimental to the individual as too much pressure and tension. Finally, a wide variety of stressors produce diverse responses ranging from muscle pain and headaches to major illness. What creates stress in each individual is as diverse as a person's responses to the stress encountered.

Three Types of Stress

Experts have come to believe in and define three types of stress: normal stress each individual feels; distress or bad stress, which is normal stress that becomes chronic and builds over a period of time; and eustress or good stress. Eustress comes from rising to a challenge and feeling a sense of control over one's life. However, each type of stress puts the body through a series of reactions that enable it to adjust to change. Stress comes in the form of life changes, either good or bad. Coping with change is the challenge of stress.

One reaction to stress comes in the form of "burnout" which is the accrual of high stress over a period of time. Many professors seem to be unaware of building stress, and it becomes more acute with the length of classroom service. Stress tends to slowly creep upon an individual. Colleagues, friends, and families will likely be the first to notice the physiological deterioration. As stress impairs the body's resistance, the person begins to suffer illnesses that could be avoided. This is followed by social withdrawal and irritability. With health and friends gone, the teaching professional loses concentration and makes mistakes that are embarrassing. This may

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lead to escape from reality through drugs and/or alcohol. Then comes "burnout" as a person finds himself/herself at the bottom of the heap. Burnout creates physical, attitudinal and emotional exhaustion. Burnout causes people to function significantly below their optimum level of performance.

Stress and burnout seem to be especially prevalent among the most talented and hardest working professors. Job-related stress diminishes the satisfaction many professors derive from their work and lessens the energy and creativity that outstanding teachers can bring to their classrooms. Stress becomes detrimental to morale and creates apathy towards professional development. Not only is extreme stress detrimental to teachers, but also to the students they serve.

Most conscientious young teachers begin their careers as inspired idealists, devoted to educationally serving others. They set unrealistic goals which, in some cases, stamp failure on their chances for success. As they are unable to meet their goals, they become frustrated, apathetic, and remove themselves from others who might help. Ultimately the stress mounts, and they can no longer handle the work. The energy and drive to make education meaningful diminishes. They become frustrated in trying to show that they are "someone who cares about quality education." The intensive personal contact with students has physically and emotionally drained them.

Mid-Career Disillusionment

Others suffer professional disillusionment in mid-career. When a "not so young professor" sees that dreams are not going to be fulfilled, accompanied by the helpless feeling that he/she is being "used" by an underpaying educational system, by self-serving students, his/her energy being consumed by personal idealism, the temptation to bail out gains validity. Good teaching saps time and energy, and some people may see the need to get out before being used up emotionally. In this mid-life crisis, an instructor suddenly realizes that the world of work presents all sorts of other meaningful and more interesting careers. Burnout for most college professors evolves into a matter of too much work with too few rewards and a career too late for change.

Others grapple to succeed through merit pay. Some become involved in infighting among colleagues to reach the top rung of the ladder. Some face publishing pressures, others large-class-schedule loads, and still others simply seek for a quiet place to prepare without interruptions. None enter education expecting to earn a lot of money, but, sensing disrespect for the monetary worth of the professor's work effort, they become disillusioned. Most teaching professionals become tired of being "hassled" about having summers off, "30-hour" work weeks, and being overpaid. The stress meter with flashing red lights reads "over-load."

Positive Stress

Stress, as suggested, need not always be negative in nature. It can actually be good and productive as well as crucial to existence. Being selected professor of the year, receiving a merit bonus, having a book published, receiving a grant, getting high student evaluations, etc. are all positive events, but stressful. The body copes with positive events just

as with the negative ones. The real bonus in positive stress involves developing a self-affirming attitude.

The solution to stress and job burnout centers on the individual. Each has the ability and the resources to deal with stress. As a person encounters stress, there are usually one of three options: escape, work harder, or make changes in lifestyle. Some believe that a vacation cures all, only to return to increased stress in the classroom. Escaping often occurs in the form of alcohol and drugs . . . both legal and illegal. Valium and Librium seem to be most often used and abused. Some research indicates that one in three people who go to a doctor for stress get a prescription for a tranquilizer. This method of escaping is like placing a bandaid on a major wound . . . temporarily soothing, but not long lasting.

Working harder under prolonged stress leads to a variety of physical symptoms from chronic colds to heart attacks. The human body typically goes through a cycle of alarm and resistance to stress. New stress sets the alarm off, and resistance to the stress occurs again. If the alarm goes off one too many times, the body becomes exhausted, no longer able to resist, which usually results in physical illness of some type. The symptoms of stress vary from person to person as do the illnesses each suffers. Prolonged stress without relief nearly always leads to illness. A classic example is when Richard Nixon resigned the Presidency and within a few days developed phlebitis.

Dropping Out

By now, many may want to give up on life, drop-out, and try to avoid stress altogether. Dropping out of life has its drawbacks too. Trading stress for a demeaning, non-stimulting lifestyle shouldn't necessarily be considered an option. One such father was jolted back to reality by his son. The six-year-old informed his father he was going to have him stuffed when he died. The father was intrigued with his son's comment and wanted to know what he was going to have him doing. The son replied, "Sitting in a bean bag with a can of beer in your hand watching TV." The answer crushed the father's ego, and changed his lifestyle.

It is helpful to learn to convert "bad" stress into "good" stress. Before an anticipated stressful event, visualize and rehearse the event to make the actual event more relaxing. During the event, the individual should reassure himself/herself that things aren't so bad after all. Afterward, celebrate, for the stress has passed! Bad stress can usually be turned around. The key is to control life, rather than being controlled by it.

Antidotes

There are many antidotes offered to deal with stress. They deal with coping, not escaping. Everyone has the "equipment" to cope with stress and can utilize many methods. The techniques will differ from person to person, but some basics for all to consider include:

1. Get Plenty of Exercise

A basic rule of stress is that when the mind is tired, exercise the body, and when the body is tired, exercise the mind. The stress of teaching for most is emotionally tiring. An effective day needs to be planned around doing some physically hard work or exercise: aerobics, walking, jogging, riding a bike, working in the garden, or anything that relieves the emotional tension. Remember that exercise is transitional; it changes as a person ages. Be prepared to change exercise and work patterns.

2. Strive for Balance

Probably the most widely violated rule in overcoming stress is living a balanced life. Often a person is too narrow in developing interests. Suggestions include developing hobbies, collections, taking classes for personal enjoyment, camping, keeping a pet, learning to ski, skate, swim, dance, or doing something that fulfills a dream. Do anything

that is not considered work. Schedule more fun in life. Too much of anything, even a favorite subject matter, makes one stale and creates stress. Living an imbalanced life is a major source of stress.

3. Moderate Habits

Moderate habits of food intake, alcohol and stimulant consumption, and the use of tobacco are essential. Feeling good relieves stress, and diet plays a significant role. Eat breakfast and strive for a "cheating" vegetarian diet with red meat only once a week. Control fat intake. Avoid white sugar, excessive salt, and limit the intake of alcohol, coffee (only two cups per day), and caffeinated soft drinks.

4. Develop a Confidante or Write a Journal

Research indicates that stress levels and burnout rates are lower for professionals who actively express and share their personal feelings with colleagues. Confide worries and problems to some trusted, level-headed person. This allows the individual to express concerns, receive constructive feedback and develop new perspectives. Journal writing is also an excellent way to ventilate feelings and to get in touch with the inner person.

5. Re-Engineer Your Thinking

Many individuals master the art of relentless perfection and its close relative, self hatred. The sensible individual will give up feeling guilty because he/she hasn't lived up to the ideal of a perfect teacher. Quit pointing out inadequacies, and overcome the idea that someone or anyone must be perfect. Understanding that perfection is an ephereal ideal has a great liberating effect. Don't ignore or destroy unique qualities in trying to reach unattainable goals.

6. Strive for Laughter

After the founding work of Norman Cousins, more and more doctors are discovering that humor is "good medicine." Learn to have more fun. A good laugh releases a great deal of tension and lightens the load of worries. Every disaster has some humor in it. Take Ziggy's advice when he says, "Learn to laugh at your problems . . . everyone else does!!"

7. Be Assertive – Simplify Life

Some people don't stand up for their rights. They become "Statues of Liberty" proclaiming, "Give me your committee assignments, your book selections, your extra work responsibilities, and any other dirty detail available." Learning to say "no" without guilt simplifies life. Each person should do his/her share and sometimes even a little more, but, when a person starts feeling used, that's the time to say no. Seek freedom; enroll in NO 101, "Assertiveness Training." A person can control the number of events in life!

9. Learn to Relax

There are many techniques to learn to relax, many of which are harder than they look, but they are well worth the effort. Consider meditation, autogenic training, Yoga, progressive relaxation, hypnosis, biofeedback . . . just to mention a few. The key is to settle on a technique that fits an individual and the circumstances. Realize that control and relaxation are possible. Develop a thick, relaxed skin.

10. Set Realistic Goals

Personal goals often undo people. People need to be reasonable about what they expect of themselves and others. It's better to accomplish what someone can than to promise what he/she can't deliver. Weed out things that aren't necessary. Don't "sweat the small stuff." Remember that life is made of small stuff. Why "hate" when a little dislike will do the job? Why show rage, when anger will do? Why be depressed, when sadness will suffice?

Personal Challenge

Dealing with stress offers a great personal challenge. First, stress must be identified as a part of successful living. Second, the motivation for change or modification of a stressful lifestyle must be established. Remember, motivation comes from within, with inspira-

tion being derived from others. Being self-motivated allows for the final phase, gradual, but progressive modification of living habits.

Habits take time to overcome. Don't plan on remaking a lifestyle in a day, week, or month. A year or even two seems to be more realistic, and the time involved is certainly well worth it. While the process is slow, a life habit has been formed. Most of all, don't get "down" because the process of change seems slow. Exercising once a week shows great progress when compared with no exercise for a previous week. Don't strive for immediate perfection. Instead, get on the road toward the desired goal and slowly develop strength in the journey. Steady commitment and time will lead to resolution.

It is important to note that each approach to coping with stress is unique and individual. What may be stressful for some may relieve stress for others. Each person's challenge lies with establishing successful stress coping strategies. Once a plan becomes identified and established, the individual typically feels a burden lifted. But real freedom from stress comes as the strategy is carried out. Understanding, combined with commitment, offers liberation from the spiral of increasing stress.

The ability to cope with stress is within each person's power. The individual's perception and attitude, both about self and environment, influences whether stress becomes injurious. The secret to a long and healthy life comes through deciding to enjoy teaching college students and being good at it. With this resolution, the college professor must decide to deal with the stress of teaching, not to avoid it. Attitude plays a major role in whether or not stress becomes harmful. Knowing when to ease up is especially vital. These factors can produce a winning and life-fulfilling combination.

Strive for Balance

In summary, strive for balance in living. Some claim that too much of a good thing is wonderful! But it is also highly stressful. Too much of anything can prove harmful. The temptation to stay in the saddle and with the nose to the proverbial grindstone often proves counter-productive. Stress most often accompanies the lifestyle of those who become myopic in living. They work for a living and work for a hobby. Even worse may be those who play for a living and find nothing left for meaning. A simple, but useful guideline suggests: when the body is tired, exercise the mind, and when the mind is tired, exercise the body. Balance can be achieved.

Finally, stress must be viewed with realism. Learning to cope with stress may take years, and there are no easy answers or quick fixes. Each person is born with an energy savings account. A person can decide whether to use it in responsible, stress-coping ways and set the world on fire, or to burnout. Most importantly, stress or burnout at any stage is 100 percent avoidable and reversible. Set the world on fire!

ENHANCING LEARNING BY PROMOTING SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-ACCEPTANCE*

Dr. Sharon Staples

Teaching swimming lessons at the local community swimming pool was the beginning for my understanding of learning and promoting self-esteem. Eight to ten frightened, shivering little four- and five-year-old bodies would cling to the side of the pool waiting for 'teacher' to hold them as they ventured into the deep never, never land of the five-foot end of the pool. As the fleeting summer weeks passed, each little body got browner and braver. Graduation day was highlighted by jumping off the diving board and swimming to the side of the pool *unattended*. The moment of truth for me, as the teacher, was when each child would run excitedly to his or her parent or grandparent, and shout for all the world to hear, "Look what I can do. Watch me."

Achievement in the Doing

As the one who held, encouraged, pushed, caught, balanced, manuevered, and reassured, I was totally forgotten. The achievement was in the doing, not in how that doing evolved. The jumping and swimming didn't even seem as significant to those little swimmers as the doing of them *unattended*. To them, their achievement was a self-achievement — a "look what I can do," singular, self-learned skill.

Twenty-five years later I am still encouraging, pushing, balancing, and manuevering students into arriving at that moment of self-glory, self-pride, self-dependence in their academic accomplishments. Having experienced my own intellectual birth, I can and do rejoice anew each time a student hands in a 'first time A paper' or shows me a high mark on a test from another class. What they are saying is "look what I can do."

Explaining how teachers can guide students to their individual intellectual births by promoting self-esteem will be very difficult at best; in fact, it may be nearly impossible. My mind envisions Anne Sullivan struggling with Helen Keller, desperately wanting Helen to understand that the symbols she works into Helen's hands have real meaning. The symbols stand for objects, ideas, people. I rejoiced when Helen knows for the first time that the object water has a sign and that the sign represents an object. Helen (Keller, 1961, p. 34) writes:

> I knew then that w-a-t-e-r meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, it is

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true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

She races to her mother and father and begins to sign everything, every word that has been laboriously worked into her hand. Anne Sullivan, the teacher, is forgotten for a time. Helen is saying to the world, "Look what I can do. Look what I know." Her ability to understand has quickened her sense of self. She feels awakened and aware. She understands that she exists and she has meaning.

History is filled with examples of forgotten teachers and forgotten times, energies, and processes. It is the doing that is remembered. Obviously, the Anne Sullivans, the teachers, play a most significant role in providing the atmosphere for self-discovery, self-understanding and self-acceptance. But how? Shel Silverstein's poem, "Listen To The Mustn'ts" (Fynn, 1974, p. 27) portrays for me the philosophy behind the 'how' for any teacher:

Listen to the MUSTN'TS child,
Listen to the DON'TS
Listen to the SHOULDN'TS
The IMPOSSIBLE, THE WON'TS
Listen to the NEVER HAVES
Then listen close to me —
Anything can happen, child,
ANYTHING can be.

If a teacher believes what Mr. Silverstein writes, that ". . . anything can happen child, anything can be," then the atmosphere for mutual self-enhancement can permeate the student/teacher relationship and can set the stage for further self-investment. The attitude of the teacher is paramount. What the student has to hear, and what the teacher has to say is, "I believe in you." How does a teacher convey this attitude of belief and positive expectations? How does a teacher promote self-investment which leads to self-understanding which leads to self-acceptance which leads to self-esteem?

Teacher Attitudes

My premise is an old and tried one: To believe in others is to believe in self. A teacher with little self-esteem will be hard-pressed to build it in others. In essence, we see what we are. The earlier statement that promoting self-esteem in others will be difficult at best, now moves closer to home because the bottom line of enhancing learning through promoting self-acceptance in others is, "I must have it to give it." If the teacher is to provide the atmosphere for jumping off the board and swimming to the side unattended, he or she must also jump off and swim before inspiring the feat in the student.

Recent research in the discipline of counseling psychology (Kagan, Havemann, and Segal, 1984) has determined that it is the personal qualities of the therapist that impact the client, not necessarily the distinctive therapy employed. In the same light, to enhance learning by promoting self-esteem and self-acceptance in others, the promoter him/herself must impact the learner positively. The promoter must possess or be in the process of possessing her or his own self-esteem and believe with conviction in the dignity and individuality of others.

Researchers (Jourard and Landsman, 1980, p. 13) have compiled and synthesized the thoughts of noted psychologists on qualities and characteristics that those with self-esteem or a healthy personality possess. These characteristics are:

Openness to new ideas and to people.
Care for self, for others and for the natural world.
Ability to integrate negative experiences into the self.
Creativity.
Ability to do productive work.
Ability to love.

These qualities are not inherent at birth. They must be developed, which development requires gaining some interpersonal skills. Johnson lists several skill areas that lead to gaining autonomy or self-esteem. They are a) learning to appropriately self-disclose or give and receive feedback; b) learning to trust ourselves and others in sharing our self-disclosures; c) learning to communicate our

physical, psychological and emotional awareness and being open to the awareness of others; d) learning to accept weaknesses and strengths in self and others (Johnson, 1981). As Hugh Prather (1970) wrote: unless I accept my faults, I will certainly doubt my virtues." Three other areas where skill-building is required are conflict, anger and stress. Acknowledging and dealing with our conflicts, anger and stress is as difficult to accomplish as is self-disclosing, trusting, communicating, and accepting faults and weaknesses. Gaining these skills is a life-long process. As existentialists and humanists contend (Corey, 1982), personal growth is acquired through the process of becoming.

Classroom Procedures

As we embark on our journey of enhancing self-esteem there are some mechanical, house-keeping procedures that can be implemented in the classroom that indicate to the student the respect and dignity we have toward him or her. Some interpersonal exchanges that are basic are: "Thank you." "I appreciate your input." "I think we are thinking along the same lines." "What is your view?" "I'm interested in your opinion." Notes on papers can encourage and re-direct the student, rather than punish, showing the student how to improve rather than how poorly he or she did. An attitude of "let me be a resource to you rather than a judge" seems to promote re-investment in one's own capabilities.

Viktor Frankl (1963, p. 36) recounts in vivid terms the agony of insult he and others suffered at the hands of their prison camp guards:

> . . . but suddenly I received two sharp blows on my head. Only then did I spot the guard at my side who was using his stick. At such a moment it is not the physical pain which hurts the most . . . it is the mental agony caused by the injustice, the unreasonableness of it all.

Teacher Putdowns

Teachers have the capacity and the vehicle to insult their students and, unfortunately, many do so in the guise of teaching. Ignorance or lack of knowledge is what the student comes to the classroom to erase. Most are eager to learn, and, to be belittled or punished for acknowledging a deficit is tantamount to insult, perhaps even agony for the student. Insult stifles motivation for learning.

Jourard and Landsman (1980) write of individual characteristics that contribute to and detract from healthy personalities. One of their premises is that a person's need to be right may distort that person's perceptions. As educators, we are supposed to know more than our students (perhaps, a distorted perception on our part). Some teachers' need to be right distorts their true purpose as teachers, which is to teach, not to punish or insult.

Mister God, This Is Anna (Fynn, 1974) is a delightful true story about teaching and learning. In one scene little Anna, who is 5 years old, shares with her new adult friend, Fynn, how she discovered that two plus five equals four. When Anna tells her friend, Fynn, he agrees with her and says that two plus five can also equal ten. Anna had discovered the difference in addition by seeing the reflection in the water of numbers on the sides of boats docked in the harbor; Fynn's discovery appeared by seeing the reflection of numbers in a mirror. Each saw the two and

five as two 2's or two 5's, or one of each depending on the reflection. When Anna told her teacher Miss Haynes, Miss Haynes told her "not to be silly, not to waste time." Anna stopped valuing Miss Haynes' opinion on anything and refused to go back to school.

Does our need to be right, our need to be *the* teacher distort our perception? Or, can we learn and share in our students' perceptions and encourage their individual sense of learning? If we can confirm in our students their ability to think and to manipulate ideas, to share their perceptions, we may come close to building self esteem in them. Kahlil Gibran (1923, p. 56), the Lebanese poet, wrote:

> No man can reveal to you ought but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge.
>
> The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.
>
> If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

Returning to the postulate that to believe in self is to believe in others, I am gratified by Gibran's phrase, "the teacher . . . gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and lovingness." If we esteem others as ourselves, if we accept others as ourselves, we can enhance learning because our behavior invites the student to discover her or his own mind, own wisdom. We are revealing by our behavior toward our students what we think of ourselves. Johnson (1981, p. 3) writes:

> . . . We need to be confirmed as a person by other people. Confirmation consists of response from other people in ways that indicate we are normal, healthy, and worthwhile. Being disconfirmed consists of responses from other people suggesting that we are ignorant, inept, unhealthy, unimportant, or of no value, and at worst, that we do not exist.

Respect Student Individuality

Confirmation that one's mind and wisdom and self are highly valued may be accomplished by letting him or her jump off the board and swim to the side unattended. The teacher is on the sideline ready to jump in and rescue a not-yet-skilled swimmer or theme writer or test-taker. The teacher is there to sustain, guide and direct, to respect the dignity and individuality of the student. If we provide Gibran's "faith and lovingness," we may be providing the atmosphere for self-exploration, self-acceptance, and self-confirmation. If we can instill in our students Silverstein's premise that "anything can happen child, anything can be," we have helped map the journey of gaining self-esteem. People, not programs, enhance learning.

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